

THE OLD-TIME CIRCUS.

The circus thirty years ago was better far than now:  
The elephant was a wonder just to see!  
I could watch him half a day  
As he fed himself with hay;  
And each separate beast was worth the price to me.  
Never clown was half so funny; never monkey half so droll;  
All the tinsel was pure metal then to me;  
Every acrobat, amazing; every rider, simply great;  
And that small trapeze man—what a man was he!  
And when the woman sang: "We Parted by the Riverside,"  
And "You'll Not Forget," and "You'll Remember Me,"  
She was really so pathetic  
That I wiped my eyes and cried;  
I wanted then to take her home with me.  
The shows we see in these days are never half so fine;  
The cost of tickets often bothers me;  
Though the man still cracks his whip,  
And the clown seems pretty flip,  
There is nothing much I care to hear or see,  
Thoughts of business, taxes, losses; rheumatism, other crosses,  
All combine to make the circus seem quite flat;  
I no longer love the songstress, with her paint and frills and flosses!  
I no longer want to take her home, at that!  
But I'd like to see the old-time show of thirty years ago.  
When I wore no pointed shoes—my feet were bare,  
When lemonade was nectar  
And peanuts were a joy;  
That old show without a worry or a care!  
—Pueblo Post.

An Army Wife.

BY CAPTAIN CHARLES KING.

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SYNOPSIS.

Chapter I.—Fannie McLane, a young widow, is invited to visit the Graftons at Fort Sedgwick. Her sister tries to dissuade her, as Randolph Merriam, (whom she had liked for old McLane) and his bride are stationed there.  
Chapter II.—Fannie McLane's wedding causes family feeling. A few months later she, while traveling with her husband, meets Merriam, on his wedding trip.  
Chapter III.—Some time previous to this Merriam had gone on a government survey, fallen ill, and had been nursed by Mrs. Tremaine and daughter Florence. A hasty note from Mrs. McLane's stepson takes him to the plains.  
Chapter IV.—Young McLane dictates to Merriam a dying message, which is sent to Parry (a young Chicago lawyer and brother-in-law of Mrs. McLane). Reply causes Merriam to swoon. He is taken to the Tremaine's; calls for Florence.  
Chapter V.—Engagement of Florence Tremaine to Merriam is announced; wedding shortly follows.  
Chapter VI.—Mr. McLane is mysteriously shot in San Francisco. Merriam is greatly excited when he reads account in papers. While still in mourning Mrs. McLane prepares to visit Fort Sedgwick.  
Chapter VII.—Mrs. McLane arrives at the fort. Merriam is startled at the news, and he and his wife absent themselves from the formal hop that evening.  
Chapter VIII.—Mr. and Mrs. Merriam pay their respects to the widow on an evening when she would be sure to have many other callers. When the call is returned Merriam is away, and his wife pleads illness as excuse for not seeing her. Mrs. McLane receives telegram: "Arrested, Chicago. Your uncle stricken—paralysis. You will be summoned. Secure papers, otherwise lose everything. C. M." She faints and is revived with difficulty.  
Chapter IX.—Mrs. McLane desires to see Merriam. Grafton persuades him to go, but the widow postpones the meeting till next noon.  
Chapter X.—Florence learns Merriam has been to see Mrs. McLane, and in a storm of passion will not allow him to explain. Shortly after Merriam is intercepted by Fannie McLane as he is passing through Grafton's yard. Florence witnesses the meeting, which she supposes has been prearranged, and swoons.  
Chapter XI.—Mrs. McLane begs Merriam for papers given him by her stepson, but which he tells her were all forwarded to Parry. Merriam is seriously wounded in fight with greasers.  
Chapter XII.—Upon regaining her strength Florence returns to her home, which she now in her jealous brooding decides to leave.

CHAPTER XII.—CONTINUED.

Wild-eyed, with beating heart, Florence rushed through the dining-room to the dark kitchen beyond and rapped imperiously at a door. "Hop Ling!" she cried, "up, I need you." No answer. "The brute," she murmured to herself, as she threw herself heavily upon the door, and it flew open and plunged her in. The Chinaman's little sanctum was deserted. She kept no maid. One schooled Chinaman easily and efficiently did all the housework of a lieutenant's humble quarters and was generally employed in that capacity in almost every garrison of the far west. She flew to the rear door and locked that, then up to the second story where were the pretty guestrooms as well as their own—hers and Randy's, with all their closets and nooks and corners. She took one rapid survey through them, and then one fierce, wild look at herself in the mirror of her dainty dressing table. Are you Floy Tremaine? Are you the little girl who was reared in the Riflers? Are you to make a lifelong fool for any man? And as she spoke she began to open the dress she had been wearing for Randy's benefit. The folds of the stylish skirt, one of Mrs. Hayne's planning when in Chicago, were tossed in reckless disorder upon the snowy coverlet of the bed, and her precious locket—Randy's locket—was as suddenly unclasped from the round, white throat, and in the tumult in her soul she heard no sound of the

sudden stir and sortie at the guard-house. She never knew that there was no sentry faithful to his watch along the rear of officers' row, to take up and pass on the stirring, reassuring cry that no army girl can hear without rejoicing or miss without alarm—"Two o'clock and all's well."

The dawn was breaking over the far Jornada and turning the distant Guadalupe into gold when the Riflers rolled away—officers and men, "barring the band and company 'Ike' [by war department orders a few years ago companies "I" and "K" of each regiment of infantry were "skeletonized" by transfer of their men to other companies, leaving those two merely paper commands. Just as "Co. Q" has been for years the derisive title of the guard-house prisoners, so does "Co. Ike" begin to appear as a name for the bereaved and friendless commands referred to] at Sedgwick," as the cavalry trumpeter remarked to the gunner when they were going out to stir the echoes with their reveille; only these at Sedgwick, and one stalwart old captain with his devoted half-hundred, Tremaine, still doing duty at the cantonment—fond, lonely old father, whose heart was wrapped up in that one child, yet could not deny her to the man she loved so well. Sedgwick was beginning to yawn and stir. The night owls in the canyons were hooting back to their nests, dismayed by the howlings of the human night owls tacking home to duty, already half regretful of the whisky wasted, while before them was that remorseless wrath to come. The cooks were astir in the barracks, and filmy smoke-veils were sailing straight aloft from the chimneys of half a dozen company kitchens. Already, too, the household servants along the row of cavalry officers' quarters, that which backed to the south, were lighting their little morning blazes, for Sedgwick lay beyond range and anthracite. In the good old days of 20 years before, the cocktail, not coffee, was the necessary prelude to reveille and morning stables. Now, with the wisdom that comes long after war, only case-hardened, bandy-legged old dragoons ever dreamed of a drink at that hour of leap from sleep to life; the inner cavalryman craves the juice of Mocha and mocks at rye. From every "set" of cavalry quarters then the kitchen chimney sent aloft its feathery plume, with one exception—a subaltern's house well over toward the western end of the row; and toward the gate thereof, edging away from the ribald homeward-bound of the main road and shuffling stolidly across the mesa, Hop Ling was making his rapid way. Fan-tan had gone against him, and but for his hands his pockets were empty. Hop bore with him an air of depression, and was followed by a faint fragrance as of mandragora. His bleary little eyes were searching furtively along that line of fence and stables for the gleam of the sentry's carbine and cap ornaments. He must place that watchman of the night and know his ground before he entered post. "Spouse the officer of the guard had happened to meet him during the night. 'Spouse somebody sick. 'Spouse Misse Mellium she wantee chow-chow?' Bang! the morning gun roared its lusty summons to be up and doing, and skulking coyotes squatted lower as they sneaked away from the outlying quarters, no chicken the richer, and the guard turned out with 20 additions to company Q and more still a-coming and the telegraph instrument in the clerk's office began to call "Lalarrup—Lalarrup—Lalarrup," and the soldier operator, washing his face in a tin basin outside, glanced up and said: "The deuce with you. You always call when I'm washing. What's up now?" and had to drop ablutions, and wringing his hands as he ran, to answer the sharp, insistent summons; and as he listened his face grew keen and excited, and, checking the rapid clicking of the key one instant, he yelled to the drowsy clerk in the adjoining office: "Billy—quick! Tumble up and see if Lieut. Merriam's back. I've a message for him," and then clicked and listened and noted again; but the reveille was chirruping its merry music, and the sweet, cool, morning air rang with the melody, and the troopers were tumbling out from the barracks and ever across the parade officers came stalking forth from their doorways, for the —th were sticklers about morning stables and roll call; and, most prominent figure of all, streaking across the mesa with pig-tails and pajamas a-flying, with his felt-bottomed boots fairly flashing, with flaring eyes, distended for once at least with mad appeal and dread in every feature and shrill distress in his chattering tones, came Hop Ling, straight for the guardhouse and shrieking for "Mellium."

A new officer of the guard, a scowling and unresponsive man, turned from his survey of the array of grinning prisoners, forgetting their own troubles in the contemplation of Hop's grotesque misery, and this new official, Whittaker by name, sternly shouted: "Stop your infernal noise, you clapper-jawed heathen. What the devil's the matter?" "Mellium! Mellium!" was all poor Hop could pant. "Mr. Merriam isn't here," said Whittaker, majestically. "Oh—wha he gone?—Misse Mellium gone! She gone—Minion—alle gone!" "Whew!" said Whittaker. "Sergeant, take charge of the guard. I've got to go up to Capt. Grafton's and report this. Come on with me, you heathen," and, forgetful of the officer of the day, and only too ready to visit Grafton's and bask under that window, the lieutenant hastened away. Hop obediently and hopefully following. Matters weren't so bad perhaps, then, after all, thought he. Odd though the freak might be, his master and mistress might possibly have trotted away together for a very early morning ride and would soon be back demanding breakfast.

But Grafton was out in an instant, and together did the three hasten to the pretty nest which Randy had so proudly furnished for his bride. Hop ushered them to the dark, empty parlor, then to the empty rooms above. There on the unrumpled bed, just where she had thrown them, were the garments Flo had hastily discarded. There on the dressing table were toilet articles in wild disarray. "She's heard in some way of his orders to chase those d-d greasers," said Whittaker, sullenly. He, who hated the name of Fanny Hayward a year gone by for having jilted his fondest friend, now well-nigh hated him because the woman sought him again, and Whittaker knew it. "We can soon tell," said Grafton, briefly, "by following her trail." Down to the little stable they went; but first Grafton stepped back into Randy's bath and dressing-room. Yes, just as he thought, there was a note stuck in Randy's mirror, but no womanly little scrawl, no young wife's cooing confidence to her devoted mate. It was in stout envelope, and the superscription, in a hand that spread itself over the entire face, was formal, indeed menacing: LIEUT. MERRIAM,

Private and personal. —th Cavalry. The captain's face grew quickly grave as he came forth and closed the door behind him. "Which way did Merriam head?" asked he of Whittaker a moment later, as the three regathered back of the line. "Straight off to the southwest," said Whittaker, "and here go her tracks—by Jove! Straight away for the end of the row—and—from there?" The two officers looked in each other's eyes a moment, then strode hurriedly to

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There on the unrumpled bed just where she had thrown them.

the west end of the line. Before them there—broad and far spreading, brave in the slanting sunshine, the rolling reach of the mesa toward the Santa Clara. Beyond that valley the slow-rising stretch of desert toward the old, old mission miles and miles away. Beyond all, the far foothills and glistening range of the Mescalero. But not toward these did Mignon's dainty foot-tracks lead. Straight as the crow flies they clipped the sandy barren when once well out beyond the line and hearing of the westward sentry. Straight, swift and sure, like homing pigeon, Floy had evidently shaken loose her rein and bade her pet and precious bear her, swerving never, far at least as strength would last, to where there was ever waiting her the changeless love and pity and protection of the sheltering arms at the old cantonment, now her only hope of home.

CHAPTER XIII.

"No word of this to anyone, Whittaker," said Grafton, as they turned away. He was beginning to see through it all. He knew that two ladies of the garrison were calling at his quarters just at that luckless hour near retreat, when, as he had urged, Merriam went thither and asked for Mrs. McLane. He knew that they had left and gone on up the row while his wife was expostulating with Fanny aloft and Randy was waiting below. He knew that one at least of their number would be sure to tell what was occurring, not as a matter of malice by any means, but simply because she couldn't help telling anything and everything that she saw and heard. He knew that sympathizing women were dropping in every few minutes to see "dear Florrie" herself, if a possible thing, or to inquire how she was, and he quickly conjectured that one or more of these visitors had let fall the fatal observation. What Grafton did not know was that such a visitation had befallen after Florence had virtually asked Randy to tell where he had been, and after his hapless failure to explain immediately the entire circumstances. It roused the demon of her passionate nature to be told the truth by other lips than his. But this in itself, reasoned Grafton, was not

enough to drive Florence into flight. She must have watched for his later coming, must have seen him go—oh, fatal step! for which he, George Grafton, and no one else, was responsible—away from the path that led to his wife and home, straight to that which bore him to the side of the woman he had loved before ever he set eyes on Floy Tremaine. And thither she, perchance, had followed; but there—what had she seen?—what had she heard? There were aching hearts in many households at Sedgwick that cloudless morning, but the man who suffered most was Grafton. The whole truth flashed upon him as he followed the prints of Mignon's nimble hoof. He would have to tell his wife and Mrs. Hayne, but no one else.

"No word of this to anyone, Whittaker," therefore he cautioned, with a sigh. "Well, I'm not all asinine," was that troubled subaltern's reply, "though I dare say you've thought me so of late." "God forbid that I should judge any man," thought Grafton to himself, "after what I've done this past night." Harriet Grafton was greatly shocked when told her husband's fears, and did not altogether meekly accept his caution to keep the secret from Fanny, who still slept the sleep of the innocent and virtuous and clear of conscience. Hop Ling had been told to go indoors, put all the rooms to rights, have the breakfast table set, and breakfast prepared as usual, and he wondrously obeyed. Mrs. Hayne was speedily aroused by the announcement that Mrs. Grafton was below, and was well aware that something extraordinary had occurred to warrant a call at so early an hour. Even the children, wearied after last night's vigil, were still asleep. Donning a wrapper, she hastened out on the landing and softly called over the balusters: "I know you have news for me, Mrs. Grafton, please come up."

And in the telling of her tidings, was it any wonder that the younger matron burst into tears? "We must try to make it seem that she has ridden off at dawn in hopes of meeting Randy on his return with the prisoners," was Mrs. Hayne's decision, after she had recovered from the shock and had heard the whole story; and this commended itself to Grafton as wise when his wife came back to him and he had returned from the never-to-be-neglected "morning stables." And this too was what they intended at first to say to Merriam when he should come in, ravenous for breakfast and astonished at not finding his wife. But high noon came and brought no Randy. In the words of the acting adjutant, high noon brought only high jinks.

Crane, officer of the day, and a dozen other officers had seen Hop Ling's frantic charge across the parade at reveille, and numbers of men had heard his announcement of the general hegira at Merriam's. Before guard mounting it was known that Mignon's trail led straight away to the upper fords of the Santa Clara—far from the direction in which Randy had gone. At ten a herdsman came in who said he "reckoned the lady must have dropped this." He saw her riding like the wind the short cut for Jose's ranch on the old Navajo trail, and he handed over poor Florrie's little traveling bag, which she had evidently strapped to her saddle, never calculating—perhaps never caring—what the strain might be, never missing it when it was gone. They sent it to Mrs. Hayne, who could no longer keep up her brave face but sobbed over it as would a mother over some prized relic of a lost and beloved child.

Then Bux ordered out three of his swiftest trailers and riders and the best light wagon at the post. With the wagon went the post surgeon and Mrs. Hayne, who left her brood to a neighbor's care. They took with them such drugs and restoratives as seemed necessary, and at noon they were across the Santa Clara on the road to the cantonment, expecting to reach Jose's by nightfall and find their runaway darling there, exhausted by her long hours in saddle and compelled to stay under that friendly shelter, as (sometimes with her father and twice at least with Randy) she had stayed on her journeys to and fro. There she would have to remain over night until Mignon should be able to go on again with the rise of the morning star.

Meantime the wires from Cimarron Junction had been hot with news, and McGrath, the operator, lived the day of his life, for hours the most important man at the post. The rioters had got wind of the coming of troops and had sought to block the way by wrecking a freight caboose in Calamas Gorge. The Riflers swarmed out and had things in shape within the hour, and went whistling on again. Everyone knew trouble would end the moment they got to the scene of the strike, but what might not happen meantime?

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

This Ought to Be Stopped. "That was an awful tragedy at St. Louis the other night." "What was it? I haven't read the paper to-day." "One of the bridesmaids at a wedding playfully threw her slipper after the happy couple and hit the groom."—Chicago Daily News.

M QUAD'S FUN

KEEPING A GOOD THING.

The cabin stood close to the road running over the bottom lands, and on three sides of it the swamp and the slimy water came up to within 20 feet of the logs. Seated on the ground, with his back to the house on the front, was a "settler," and before I was within speaking distance I saw him shaking with a chill. I gave him a "howdy?" as I came up, but it was a full minute before he could reply.

"S-s-same to yo', stranger. Mighty nice day?" "Anything wrong?" I asked. "No, sah. Jest got my usual chill on this arfternoon. That's the ole woman out on that log, and she's got her c'min on, too. Bill and Nancy orter be around sumwhar'. All of us chill at the same time."

"This must be a great place for the ague." "It is, sah. Yes, sah, yo' might look all over the state of Mississippi and not find another place like it. Can't be beat fur ague. Anybody lookin' fur chills don't want to go no further."

"How long have you been here?" "Bout 15 y'ars, I reckon," he said, as he shivered in a way to shake the chinking out of the crevices between the logs. "And how long have you had the ague?"

"Jest the same—bout 15 y'ars. Got it right away, sah, and it dun hangs on to us. Over at the sawmill the ager cums and goes, but here it stays right by yo' and yo' know what to depend on."

"Any good drinking water around here?" "Nuthin' but swamp." "Could I get a bite to eat?" "Not to-day, sah, as the co'umeal is all out."

"Anything for the horse?" "Nuthin', sah." At this point the woman came over and sat down beside her husband and shivered and shook and rattled her teeth together, and finally asked: "Say, Jim, what's he'n axin' 'bout?"

"Bout the ager," replied the man. "I should think you'd move away," I said, as I looked at the desolate surroundings. "What fur?" promptly asked the man.

"Well, to get rid of the ague, for one thing." "Stranger, yo' don't know this kentry very well, I take it?" "No, I don't."

"Kase if yo' did, yo' wouldn't talk that way. We could be a-gittin' this very day if we wanted to, but we don't. We've had this ager fur 15 y'ars and dun got used to it and know all about it, and we ain't gwine to be a-gittin' fur some other place and trade it in fur swamp-fever or yaller jandice! We's pore folks and low-down, but we ain't makin' fules o' ourselves!"

Fixing It With the Candidate.

Soon after we arrived at Green Springs a passenger named Hopkins came back to the hotel after a stroll on the streets and excitedly inquired of the landlord where the sheriff could be found. The landlord answered that he was the sheriff, and asked what was up.

"Why, I just ran across a man who held up a stage I was in a month ago and robbed me of \$300!" explained Mr. Hopkins. "Shoo! Is he tall, dark-faced and wears long whiskers?" "That's the one!"

"Left shoulder lops a leetle, and he has lost a front tooth?" "He's the man—the very one, and I want him arrested at once!" "I wouldn't go for to arrest Bill Powers," said the landlord in his easiest way. "Bill ain't holdin' up stages any more."

"But he robbed me of \$300," persisted the victim. "Reckon he did, but you can git that back without any fuss. Jest sit down till I find him." The landlord went out and was gone about ten minutes. When he returned he handed a roll of bills to Mr. Hopkins and said: "There's your \$300 and \$20 over. I told you Bill would be willin' to do what was right."

"He—he paid it back, did he?" "Of course." "Well, I wouldn't have believed it. What arguments did you have to use to get it back?" "None 'tall, stranger—none 'tall. I jest went to him and told him that if he was goin' out of the stage-robbin' bizness and into the legislature he'd better square up with you before you blabbed too much about a triflin' leetle incident, and he handed over the money. I wouldn't say any more about it if I was you. His party might git the idea you was down on its candidate and in favor of the other feller!"

The Rule Did Not Apply.

Park Policeman—Don't you see that sign, madam? "No dogs allowed at large." Lady—Oh, yes; but my dog is so very small.—N. Y. Journal.